

MONTANA KAIMIN

Shattering ceilings in science

Professor Erim Gómez gives UM students what he never had — a professor of color

Story and Photos by Antonio Ibarra



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Kiosk

Cover Photo
Antonio Ibarra



The Montana Kaimin is a weekly independent student newspaper at the University of Montana. The Kaimin office and the University of Montana are located on land originally inhabited by the Salish People. Kaimin is a derivative of a Salish language word, "Qe'ymin," that is pronounced kay-MEEN and means "book," "message" or "paper that brings news."

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New episodes Monday

THE GARAGE: SE 1 EP 6



WALTER MEDCRAFT | MONTANA KAIMIN

We deserve quarantine numbers

With the most students living on campus in years and far fewer COVID-19 restrictions — at a time when the virus is peaking in Missoula — it would seem like not only a smart plan, but a vital mitigation strategy, to open up more quarantine and isolation spots for students at UM. But the Kaimin reported this week that the University is providing significantly fewer isolation spaces than it did last year.

We have more than a hundred University-affiliated cases, fewer rules around large events, and campus housing officials who have to leave contact tracing to the Missoula City-County Health Department, which is on average four days behind on calling a positive case's close contacts.

And the University still won't regularly release its quarantine numbers, or the percentage of quarantine space being filled, citing health privacy violations. But UM cited the same concerns for the overall number of cases on campus, data the county now reports every day. Numbers and locations do not give away private information.

Resident assistants have been left in the dark, as UM said they aren't involved in contact tracing. They are more likely to hear about a sick kid on their floor when they hear the coughs a few doors down. And for on-campus residents who survive on shared bathrooms and study lounges, every day counts to prevent the virus from spreading.

On top of that, UM asks students to leave campus for their quarantine periods, but where should students go? Especially freshmen and people who have no family in town.

We know there is space for students, and that it hasn't reached capacity, but UM is missing the point. Why should the campus focus on renovating Aber Hall when it was the largest space for students to quarantine?

And, on top of it, we're back to in-person classes, where our professors have been asked to make seating charts for contact tracing purposes. With contact tracing being days behind from the county, professors are being tasked with helping these efforts in their own classrooms. If not them, who else will do the work?

With more students, more cases and fewer isolation spaces for students in residence halls, county contact tracers' resources are spread thin just dealing with campus' COVID-19 numbers — let alone the wider Missoula community.

If Seth Bodnar and UM actually care about student safety, and not just filling dorms, then the University should regularly release its quarantine numbers, or at least a percentage of the spaces filled. It would likely better inform our students who live on campus, and set off the alarm if the situation gets worse.

Like it? Hate it? Wish we were dead?
email us your opinions at
editor@montanakaimin.com

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

				9			1	3
	4			8		5		
9			2					
		4						2
	2	5			4	3		9
7	3		9		2	8		1
5			6		1			7
4		1					8	

Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answers to Last Week's Sudoku:

6	4	2	8	1	7	5	9	3
1	5	8	6	3	9	7	2	4
3	9	7	4	5	2	8	6	1
8	7	4	1	6	3	9	5	2
5	1	9	2	7	4	6	3	8
2	3	6	5	9	8	1	4	7
4	6	3	7	8	5	2	1	9
7	2	1	9	4	6	3	8	5
9	8	5	3	2	1	4	7	6

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INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
PRESENTS

A CLIMATE CONVERSATION

FEATURING
AL GORE & MAX BAUCUS

A VIRTUAL EVENT
7 P.M. | OCTOBER 28
Register at: tinyurl.com/uuk3xx9e

Feature Photo: Dancing with a twist



Members of the University of Montana Dance Program perform on location around campus for its annual concert "Dance on Location" Oct. 2. The free outdoor concert started with performances outside the Mansfield Library and continued as attendees traveled to different venues to see other dance and performance-art installations. **MATTHEW TRYAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Briefs: Anti-abortion bills, 100 UM COVID-19 cases and humanities grant

ABORTION BILLS TEMPORARILY HELD UP

Yellowstone County District Court Judge Michael Moses halted the enactment of three abortion-restricting bills for 10 days on Sept. 30 in an eleventh-hour decision. His decision came just hours after he began to preside over the Planned Parenthood legal challenge against the bills' constitutionality.

The restrictions were slated to take effect on Oct. 1, but Moses granted the temporary restraining order on the bills in order to study the case against their constitutionality more closely. This decision arrived after the state asked the third presiding judge on the case to remove himself due to bias the day before Moses assumed the role.

The three bills being challenged consist of a ban on abortions after 20 weeks, the prohibition of the use of telehealth to prescribe medication abortions and the requirement for abortion providers to offer their patients an ultrasound before their abortion procedure.

Anti-abortion activists rejoiced when Gov. Gianforte signed the bills in April, but are now skeptical of their future under Moses, who former Gov. Bullock appointed as a democratic nominee in 2014.

"As much as we wanted to celebrate, it was a given that the bills would be challenged, and in fact Planned Parenthood is suing the State of Montana to have the bills overturned," said Lianna Karlin, the president of Right To Life Of Montana.

Planned Parenthood said they are optimistic to permanently stop the bills from enactment, and stressed how dire the consequences of their implementation could be.

"Each of these laws individually does a number of things to create barriers of access to abortion care, but when they're together they compound and squeeze down the amount of time and ability to access abortions throughout Montana," Martha Stahl, the president of Planned Parenthood of Montana said. (Emily Tschetter)

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Missoula City-County Health Department reported eight new UM-affiliated COVID-19 cases from last weekend, breaking 100 total active University cases Monday for the first time since October 2020, with 106 infected students, staff and faculty.

"More students are getting sick now compared to last year," said Hayley Devlin, a public information officer for Missoula County. "Cases are coming faster and it has been difficult keeping up."

The rising trend of infections comes as Missoula County broke 2,000 total active cases this week. The spike beat last fall's peak of 1,200 active cases, and infections have taken tolls on the community. Nineteen county

residents died from COVID-19 in September, and 50 people are currently hospitalized in Missoula hospitals.

Newly released data from the county shows unvaccinated individuals are getting COVID-19 on average 163 per 100,000 people, while those fully vaccinated have a breakthrough case rate of 53 per 100,000 people.

Devlin said the health department has struggled with connecting with close contacts. On average it is taking four days for contact tracers to reach people exposed to positive cases. (Griffen Smith)

HUMANITIES AWARDED HALF-MILLION DOLLAR GRANT

The College of Humanities and Sciences will be able to expand some programming after the school picked up a one-year grant of \$499,000 Monday.

Three University departments, history, Native American studies and literature, will expand course selection and scholarship programs in partnership with UM's Humanities Institute. This comes as the college, UM's largest, faces long-term budget cuts.

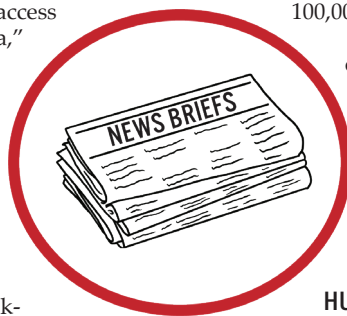
Faculty involved revealed the Provost Office levied a \$2.6 million cut in April for

the college to make by 2023. Part of the grant allows UM to support a new Public History Certificate and a series of classes called "Making the Humanities Public: Racial Justice, Death in a Time of COVID, and Sustaining Native Scholarship," led by Dr. Tobin Miller Shearer, UM professor of history and African-American studies.

UM's Humanities Institute, created in 2016, brings together students and faculty from different departments to collaborate on special projects. In the midst of the pandemic, the institute offered a panel on racial justice and the humanities via Zoom in the fall of 2020. (GS)

DIVERSEU LOOKING FOR SUBMISSIONS

This year will mark the 16th year of the University of Montana's DiverseU, the annual diversity symposium. The event will take place Nov. 2-4. UM is accepting proposals for the symposium up until Oct. 18. Proposals can consist of everything from art exhibitions to research presentations from students, staff, faculty, alumni and the general Missoula public. Each year presentations, discussions, exhibitions, readings, etc. are held throughout the three days of DiverseU and culminate in a keystone event. Anyone can submit a proposal on UM's DiverseU website before the Oct. 18 deadline. (Mazana Boerboom)



Blotter: Arson, returned bikes and a rise in thievery

GRACE CARR

grace.carr@umconnect.umt.edu

Between Sept. 23 and 29, the University of Montana Police Department reported 13 crimes on and around campus. Theft took back first place this week, logging eight of the 13.

SATURDAY 9/25: HOT HOT GAME DAY

The Griz had another successful homecoming weekend, but crowds at the football game were not as fortunate. UMPD responded to four medical calls in the stadium, mainly caused by alcohol and afternoon sun, and cleared what was believed to be a suspicious device from the field. UM Police Chief Brad Giffin said the beer garden at the tailgate brought no increase in crime or alcohol-related issues.

SATURDAY 9/25: BIKE RETURNED

We'll get this one out of the way. A bike was stolen from the Craighead Apartments and no suspects were identified. But wait! We have some good bike-theft news. The Missoula Police Department returned a stolen bike to campus on Sept. 23. We finally have justice for one of our many lost bicycles. There is hope, people!

SATURDAY 9/25: A LITTLE FIELD FIRE

What happens when you mix two bored kids, a box and some pine needles? In this

case, you get an arson report. Around 9:30 p.m. on Sept. 25, UM responded to a fire at UM Practice Field. Two juveniles lit a box of pine needles on fire and ran from the scene. Officers extinguished the fire and the field was unharmed, but the culprits were unidentified.

TUESDAY 9/28: WHO DUN IT

In this week's case of "Whodunit," the primary suspects are a possible trespasser and a curious doggo. Between 9 and 11 a.m. on Sept. 28 in Helena Court, a woman reported someone had broken into her house while she was away. Nothing was taken and there was evidence of unlawful entry, but officers

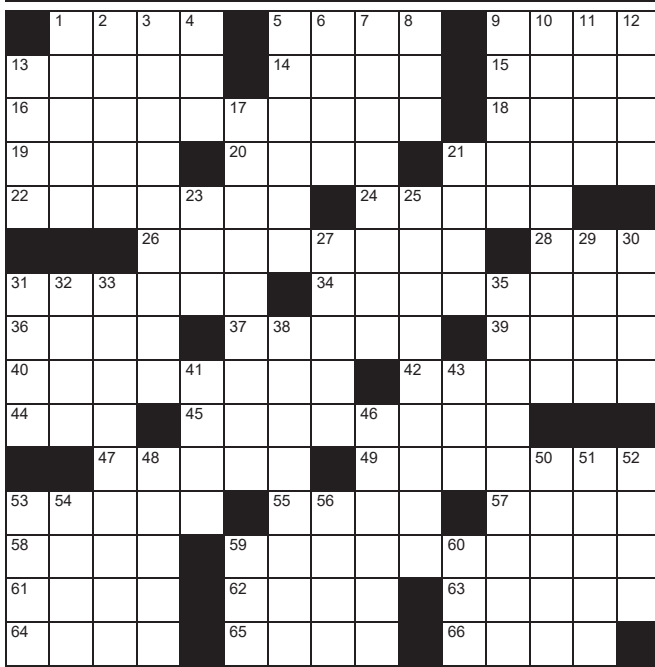
believe her dog may have gotten out of its cage and caused damage to the apartment. No suspects have been identified, except for the pupper. But who could really accuse such an adorable face?

WEDNESDAY 9/29: BURGLARY BUST

Desperate times call for desperate measures on a college campus. Between the night of Sept. 28 and morning of the 29th, someone attempted to steal money from the recess cash box of the coffee shop inside the education building. The suspect pried open the metal gate, snuck inside and damaged the cash box in search of extra funding. Unfortunately for the culprit, the coffee shop had been emptied of all cash, so the mission was unsuccessful.



The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke



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ACROSS

- 1 Splinter group
- 5 "Get ___ it!"
- 9 Right away
- 13 Hidden hoard
- 14 Poor, as excuses go
- 15 Cowboy's gadget
- 16 Imprudent
- 18 Medal recipient
- 19 Bygone autocrat
- 20 State firmly
- 21 Postgame summary
- 22 Fit to be taken in
- 24 SF slugger
- 26 Moon shape
- 28 Anagram for "tap"
- 31 Beach robe
- 34 UC Irvine mascot
- 36 Grimm beast
- 37 Old hat
- 39 Hardly the life of the party
- 40 Arm-twisting
- 42 Radar may track them
- 44 Bio stat
- 45 Family tree listing
- 47 Green 2001 title hero
- 49 Act the clown
- 53 Misbehave
- 55 Heroic deed
- 57 No longer here
- 58 Weaver's apparatus
- 59 "Swan Lake" performers
- 61 Fish for a sandwich
- 62 Additionally
- 63 Like some gases
- 64 Pop the cork

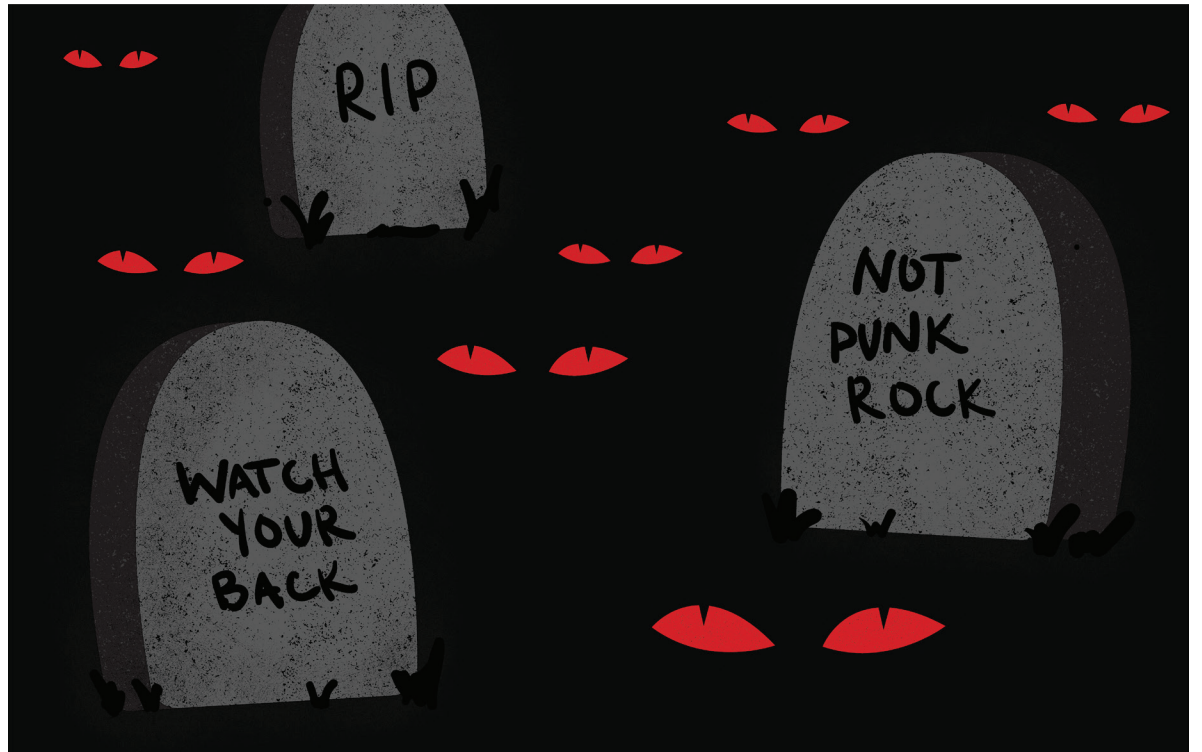
- 65 Glitzy rock genre
 - 66 Disease spreader
- DOWN
- 1 It's hot stuff
 - 2 Showy display
 - 3 Barbie or Batman, e.g.
 - 4 TV titan Turner
 - 5 Pizza topping
 - 6 Hibiscus holder
 - 7 Up-and-coming
 - 8 Cabernet, e.g.
 - 9 White as a ghost
 - 10 Fan at the game
 - 11 That certain something
 - 12 Play thing?
 - 13 Quote, as a source
 - 17 2010 Gosling film, "Blue ___"
 - 21 Fixed charge
 - 23 Undergarment
 - 25 Not having made a will
 - 27 Queeg's command

- 29 Make waves?
- 30 Uno + dos
- 31 Cola starter
- 32 All worked up
- 33 Masonry material
- 35 Australia native
- 38 Landslide of stones
- 41 Bony fish
- 43 Cameron's "Knight and Day" co-star
- 46 Jewish greeting
- 48 Bette Davis flick, "Of ___ Bondage"
- 50 Contents of some cartridges
- 51 Take a piece from
- 52 Exterminator's target
- 53 Kind of flute
- 54 ___ d'etat
- 56 Anna's sister in "Frozen"
- 59 Do a checkout chore
- 60 18-wheeler

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

C	H	O	P	S	A	G	A	P	E	A	S		
Y	O	U	R	P	R	O	D	A	L	P	H	A	
A	N	T	I	L	I	A	R	R	U	R	A	L	
N	E	W	S	D	E	A	L	E	R	C	O	N	E
A	M	E	N	N	O	M	I	N	E	E			
B	A	R	E	D	U	C	A	T	E	D			
A	B	D	O	M	I	N	A	L	N	A	T	A	L
A	B	L	Y	D	A	V	I	S	T	I	L	E	
S	A	Y	S	O	M	I	N	U	T	E	M	A	N
				T	U	N	E	L	E	S	E	N	D
C	A	T	E	R	E	R	P	A	S	T			
O	V	E	R	T	I	C	K	E	R	T	A	P	E
L	I	M	B	O	C	O	I	N	U	B	E	R	
T	A	P	E	R	A	C	T	S	C	L	O	G	
N	O	D	E	N	A	T	E	K	E	N	O		

Horror-scope: get your spook on



CLARISE LARSON
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OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

Roses are red, it's the first week of October, which means it's basically Halloween, so bend over! Yep, it's time to participate in anything remotely related to the holiday — thus, MOVIES!!!! There are a few staples in every Halloween movie: the big-boobed bimbo, the jock who always dies, the nerdy outsider who is actually sexy as fuck and the monster who was just misunderstood :(But which one are you? Let's find out.

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22): Guuyyys don't make me go first! The basement is ~stinky~ *Draws the short straw* plzzz ... *Arthur fist, stomps on dirt* tHiS iSn'T fAiR!!

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): Just another night <3 Candles=lit, Salt pentagram=laid. Oh no, did I mispronounce one of these Latin phrases? I just wanted Chad to love me, I didn't mean to summon the antichrist :(

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 22): No! You hang up first! *window break* No, you hang up first *demonic growl from basement* Stop! I'm not hanging up! *gets possessed, hangs up*

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23-JAN. 19): You have final girl energy! You made it out ALIVE! BUT WAIT ... you forgot to look both ways and now you're smeared across the garbage truck's windshield. RIP in peace :(

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18): You're the monster who is misunderstood ... :(You're not like other monsters, nobody understands you!! Go read The

Modern Prometheus and cry or something. We all got issues, honey.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): ~oMg~ demon daddy don't possess me UWU XD!!! I'm so lonely tho... :(jk ...unless?

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): Put some of that fucking rage to WORK with you and your giant fucking ram head and fight that monster! If you swingin', WE ALL SWINGIN'!

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): Oh no! You tripped and got mud on your sparkling white Steve Maddens! At this point, you give up. <3 Best of luck, it's either elements or the werewolf, XOXO!

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): OMG where are we?? SAW? Omg, I'm so unprepared *yes, this is just like my fantasy* Gemini, you fucking KILLED IT (figuratively and literally)! That creepy son of a bitch had no chance against your wack ass.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): Cancer, you little wet crab. Is that the salt of the tears or the slime of the monster about to eat you?

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): POV: Your titties bounce to the beat of your friend getting stabbed. RUN AWAY! Wait, actually turn around?? Why is the demon kinda hot tho? Mommy? Sorry. Mommy? Sorry. Mommy? Sorry.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): GUUYYYYYYSSSS! We should turn around! *turns around* *dies*

Who controls the politics of guns in Montana?

EMILY TSCHETTER

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During any given election cycle, campaign ads with gun-toting politicians donning hunting vests and poised to shoot a target out of frame bombard every television viewer in Montana. Unlike in most states, Montanans can't assume these politicians have an "R" by their name when they get to the ballot box.

According to the World Population Review, two-thirds of Montanans own at least one firearm, making it the state with the highest gun ownership rate in the nation. Guns manifest in the political culture with House Bill 102, which would allow for concealed carry of firearms without a permit on college campuses.

It is one of the most right-leaning, deregulatory pieces of legislation to come out of the past legislative session, and passed on party lines before being temporarily halted by a judge in a lawsuit between the Montana University System and the attorney general. Despite blocks in the courts, HB 102 passed its readings

and votes quickly, partially due to cohesive lobbying efforts in support of it and a lack of pro-gun control legislators.

"The anti-gun side of this debate in Montana has no contenders. They have no traction," Gary Marbut, president of the Montana Shooting Sports Association (MSSA), said. "We've had many bills with popular support over the years, but until 2020, we had Steve Bullock vetoing many of them despite their majority support in the legislature. That's not the case anymore."

Gun politics are, in short, Marbut's bread and butter. He is the head of the largest gun rights interest group in the state, the author of multiple books on gun politics and claims he authored much of the pro-gun legislation of the past few decades, including HB 102.

His organization, MSSA, has seen 70 of its legislative initiatives passed and enacted into law, with many others falling victim to former Governor Steve Bullock's veto pen, as well as Brian Schweitzer's, his Democratic predecessor. The Democratic party's 16-year reign on the Montana governorship ended in 2020, and Republicans and pro-gun advocates are pleased with their leverage in the legislature.

"This was our first unified Republican government in 16 years and our legislators rightly took advantage of that," the UM College Republicans stated in an email.

Marbut and the UM College Republicans agreed that after the 2020 election, the left and gun control advocates have no significant voice or place in gun politics in Montana anymore, with Marbut even stating that MSSA has not needed to spend a lot

of its resources in lieu of the shifted political climate.

"We have chosen not to spend money in the last couple of election cycles because it has not been necessary. Montana voters no longer want to elect people who are anti-gun," Marbut said. "We can spend our money more effectively than the candidates can anyways."

Despite the relaxation of several gun control provisions passed under Democratic governorships in past legislative sessions, multiple smaller committees and government bodies resolved to oppose HB 102. The Associated Students of the University of Montana voted almost unanimously in its resolution to oppose the bill in a 22-1 vote count.

"ASUM has taken the position that HB 102 is not a well-informed policy, and it is not the right way to ensure safety on our campus," ASUM President Noah Durnell said. "The bill could foster a culture on campus that could make students feel unsafe and even have unthinkable, destructive outcomes."

Moms Demand Action and Helena Youth Against Gun Violence (HYAGV), activist groups that advocate for more restrictions on gun access and ownership, are concerned for their future roles in gun legislation negotiations. Clara McRae, a UM student, co-founder of HYAGV and organizer for the Helena March For Our Lives, felt troubled by recent political culture developments in both the state and nationwide.

"There has been a recent hardcore ideological shift in the past five years

to the right, and interest groups are capitalizing on it to spread rhetorical arguments and generally find ways to deregulate all levels of government," McRae said.

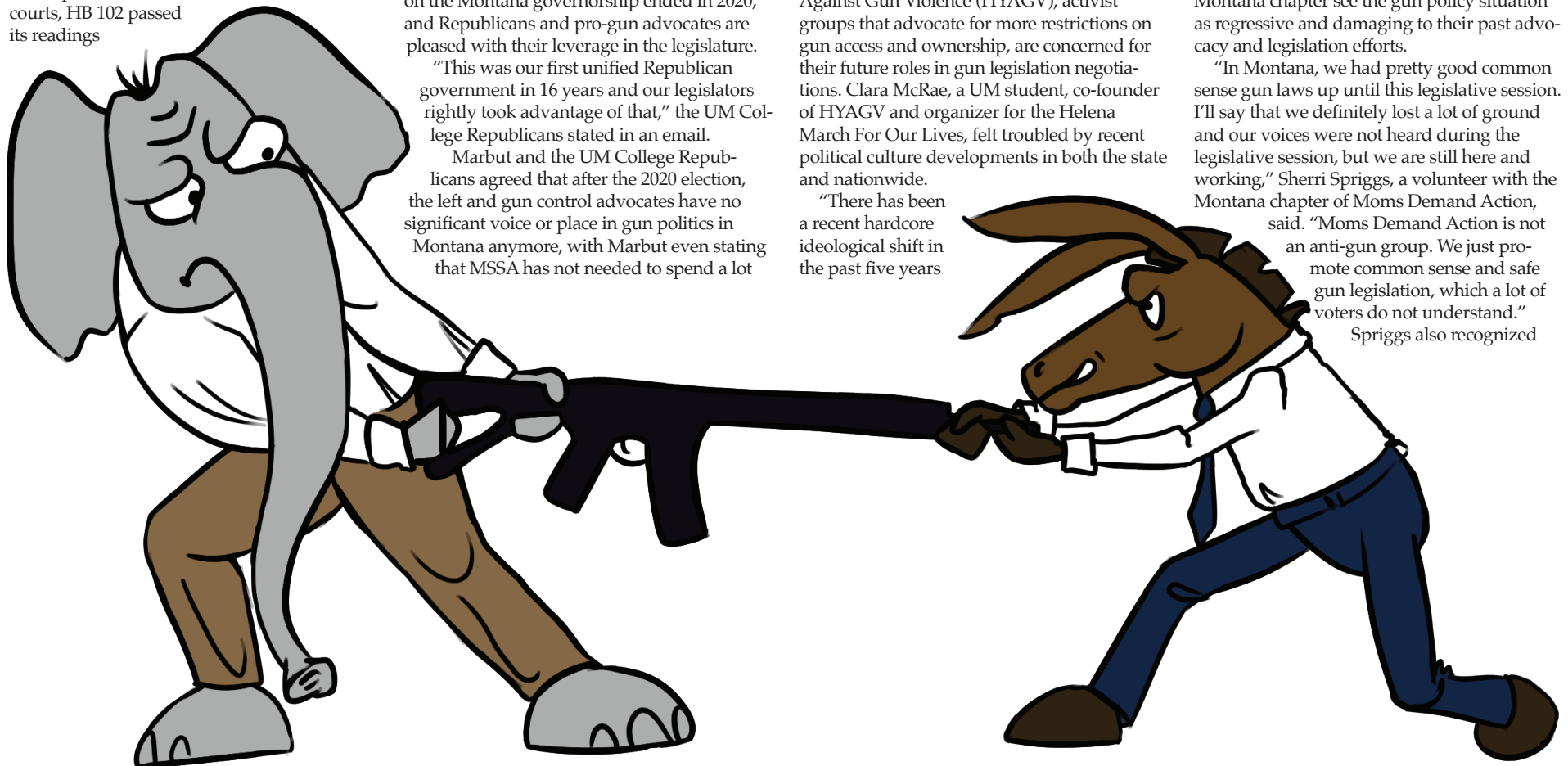
It's been three years since the mass shooting in Parkland, Florida that sparked a national student movement for sweeping gun control reforms. McRae said she is not satisfied with the results of their efforts and is losing faith in the room for gun control expansion under the current government electoral system.

"Since the March For Our Lives, nothing has really changed for the better, and some things have changed for the worse, especially over the past legislative session," McRae said. "[Student activists] should just continue what we're doing, but we might need even larger reforms before we have a chance to turn the tides."

Moms Demand Action, a pro-gun control lobbying group that emerged in the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012, continued its advocacy through the last legislative session. Volunteers with the Montana chapter see the gun policy situation as regressive and damaging to their past advocacy and legislation efforts.

"In Montana, we had pretty good common sense gun laws up until this legislative session. I'll say that we definitely lost a lot of ground and our voices were not heard during the legislative session, but we are still here and working," Sherri Spriggs, a volunteer with the Montana chapter of Moms Demand Action, said. "Moms Demand Action is not

an anti-gun group. We just promote common sense and safe gun legislation, which a lot of voters do not understand." Spriggs also recognized



MAKAYLA O'NEIL | MONTANA KAIMIN

the ideological shift that McRae noted, yet the UM College Republicans asserted that although gun control advocates do not have a lot of traction in Montana, they still have an advantage in the media and public gun rights messaging.

"We feel many students are ill-informed, both about gun rights generally and HB 102 specifically, because they've been misinformed by the media and anti-gun individuals," the UM College Republicans said. "If students were more informed about the gun purchasing process and why we have a right to bear arms, they would be more in support of HB 102."

Marbut said Gov. Greg Gianforte wanted HB 102 to be the first bill on his desk to sign, so supporters for the bill in the legislature hurried it through all the readings and votes. Gun control advocates claimed this was a deliberate strategy on behalf of the bill sponsors and gun rights interest groups to limit the opportunity for opposing voices to be heard.

"National and statewide interest groups have a huge role in gun politics in Montana, which is a huge reason why HB 102 got passed so efficiently," Durnell of ASUM said. "The bill went through the legislature very fast, which was intentional to avoid massive public backlash on behalf of the sponsors."

Activists against HB 102 are concerned with the culture the bill could create on college campuses, as well as the possibility of an increased rate of suicide by firearm with greater gun availability.

"HB 102 could definitely have dangerous consequences on college campuses, and it is not supported by any evidence," McRae said. "Lax gun restrictions on college campuses have had mixed results, but it sets a bad cultural precedent that could make students feel unsafe."

"We are mostly concerned with the enabling of more firearm suicides, but there is no evidence that introducing more guns into a space would prevent any mass shootings," Spriggs said. "By allowing for wide access to guns in public spaces like HB 102, we could see increased suicide rates among students, who have already dealt with a lot mentally with COVID-19."

In contrast, advocates for HB 102 question gun-free zones and champion the ability for people to possess guns as a means of defense.

"HB 102 would eliminate dangerous gun-free zones where, statistically, mostly criminals possess guns," Marbut said.

The UM College Republicans expanded this in the context of UM's campus, saying stu-

dents shouldn't have to call Griz Walk when walking on campus at night.

"They should be allowed to know that they are able to protect themselves when the need arises," the group said.

Despite gains made by the Republican Party and gun rights groups, advocates for gun control have not given up a future with their policies being enacted in Montana.

"I have not lost all hope. There are still plenty of people that have political power that are reasonable, Democrats and Republicans alike,"

McRae said.

In the past, members from either side of the political aisle have made agreements on gun legislation. State Rep. Seth Berglee, the primary sponsor of HB 102, signed on as a sponsor to a gun control bill authored by Helena Youth Against Gun Violence in 2019.

"If we work with people like Berglee on common sense gun legislation, we will always be able to find some sort of compromise," McRae said.

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Shattering ceilings in science

Professor Erim Gómez gives UM students what he never had — a professor of color

Story and Photos by Antonio Ibarra



Erim Gómez, pictured outside the W.A. Franke College of Forestry & Conservation, is an assistant professor in wildlife biology with a lot of firsts: He's a first-generation Mexican American and first in his family to graduate college.

EVERY DAY before coming to campus, Erim Gómez puts on a guayabera — a traditional shirt from Yucatán, Mexico. The roughly 60 guayaberas he wears are colorful and stylish, ranging from a light pistachio green to a light turquoise. And Gómez is proud to wear them because they reflect who he is and his culture.

“I wear guayaberas because they honor my father. They honor my heritage, but they also show that students can be their authentic self because I’m also trying to be my authentic self,” he said.

Gómez’s office at the University of Montana’s W.A. Franke College of Forestry & Conservation reflects his culture and identity, his life achievements and some of the things he’s most passionate about. And it also shows where he came from.

On one wall are framed pieces from some of his favorite Chicano and Mexican artists depicting the activism and struggle of Latino and Hispanic communities. One of the frames is a 1969 Time magazine cover with Mexican American civil rights activist César Chávez. It sits in view of Gómez’s desk.

Kitty-corner to his desk is a wall crammed with framed photos of frogs, insects and other aquatic amphibians.

“I just love taking macro photos of what I like to call ‘charismatic minifauna.’ I even thought about calling my own lab ‘The Charismatic Minifauna Lab,’” he said.

Gómez, a Ph.D wildlife biologist with roots in California and Oregon, is an assistant professor of wildlife biology at UM. He considers himself a naturalist at heart who has a deep love for wildlife.

This semester, Gómez is teaching courses about wildlife and people, fish and wildlife, and careers in wildlife biology.

Since arriving at UM in the fall of 2020, Gómez said he is taking his duties as a professor to teach far beyond just wildlife biology and conservation.

“I take it as an opportunity to help mentor and encourage all students, but also to help promote issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in academia and in our wildlife profession,” he said. “I enjoy working on these issues and it’s so great to be able to use my position as an assistant professor to help encourage and mentor BIPOC students. It’s just an amazing opportunity.”

Gómez is a first-generation Mexican American and first-generation college graduate. His efforts at UM come at a time when people of color are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and math fields.

Overall numbers of people in the U.S. workforce, particularly among those who have a bachelor’s degree or higher, show women and people of color are less likely to pursue a career in forestry and natural resources because of discrimination-related barriers they face when pursuing higher education.

According to the Pew Research Center, Black and Hispanic workers are underrepresented in the STEM workforce where Black workers make up 11% of the U.S. workforce overall, but represent 9% of STEM workers. Hispanics comprise 16% of the country’s workforce and only 7% of all STEM workers. Among adults with a bachelor’s degree or higher, Black people comprise just 7% and Hispanics 6% of the STEM workforce.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2021 there is still a gap in higher education fulfillment among minority students because of unequal access to key educational resources and opportunities when compared to white student groups.

At the University of Montana, the presence of students from underrepresented groups such as American Indians or Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders has been growing at a steady pace in the last three years. From 2019 to 2020 there was a 4.6% increase in the number of BIPOC students, and in 2021 that number grew again with a 6.2% increase between 2020 and 2021.

Despite a decline in overall student enrollment since 2013, UM Director of Strategic Communications Dave Kuntz said this proportional student growth shows the University is getting more diverse.

“The University’s taking steps to increase access to resources to make sure that students not only enroll here at UM, but that they can stay through all the way to graduation,” Kuntz said.

Kuntz said the University is focusing on re-shaping itself in the 21st century by building “a campus rooted in internationalization” through student exchange programs and creating programs like Montana 10, which offers academic, social and financial support to help students succeed in college.



Connecting with the natural world

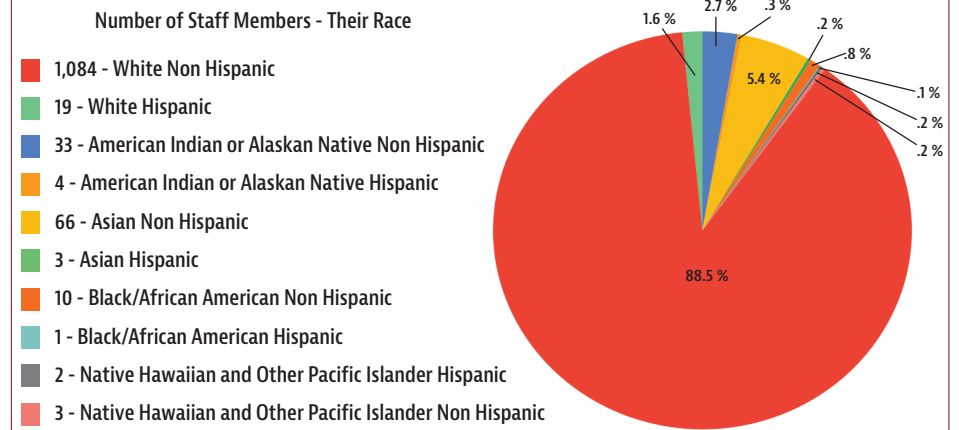
Gómez grew up west of Los Angeles in Oxnard, California, for part of his childhood with his three brothers — Eduardo, Edrik and Edem. Gómez remembers his suburban community was mostly made up of Latino and Hispanic families.

Both of Gómez’s parents immigrated from Mexico. Gómez’s father, Efrain Gómez, was born and raised in the state of Jalisco, Mexico. His mother, San Juanita Gómez, was born in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, which sits right on the border with Texas. Gómez said his mom’s family moved back and forth across the border for many years for work purposes and most of her upbringing was in the U.S.

At age 11, Gómez and his family packed up and moved north to the coastal Oregon town of Coquille. His dad fell in love with the beauty

UM Staff Diversity

Statistics reflect UM administrators, contract professionals and faculty members who chose to disclose their race.



Data courtesy of Dave Kuntz. MCKENNA JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN



Gómez points to a photo of a Spadefoot toad, one of his all-time favorites. His passion for aquatic amphibians is reflected in the photos on the wall of his office.

of the southern Oregon coast and bought an 80-acre plot with the money his family had saved over the years in California to start the family’s own working ranch.

For Gómez, living in Oregon and working on his family’s ranch made him feel isolated, but in a way that allowed him to connect more with his own family and fuel his interest in conservation and ecosystems.

“From living in a suburb in California to this town in the southern Oregon coast on an 80-acre working ranch, it made me and my family closer,” he said. “Believe it or not, but working on a ranch has made me a better ecologist. It allowed me to get that first hands-on experience and it gave me transferable skills to becoming a wildlife biologist.”

Gómez was first drawn to science at a young age from reading countless National Geograph-

ic magazines and watching documentaries narrated by British broadcaster David Attenborough.

“Reading and watching those made me realize that there was an opportunity to become a scientist,” he said. “I had two dreams as a kid: I wanted to work with amphibians and I wanted to work with grizzly bears. But growing up, I had different ideas of what I may or may not want to do. I thought about teaching. I thought about medical school. I thought about law school. But in high school, that was when I knew I wanted to get into science.”

During his high school days in Oregon, Gómez first experienced wildlife conservation at the school’s fish hatchery. There he learned about the ethics of conservation and the complications of the management of wildlife species.

“Gaining that experience at a young age

made me realize that conservation was something that people actually did for a living and that it was an actual job, so that was really instrumental," he said.

Gómez's time in middle school and high school solidified his interest in wildlife and conservation, thanks to the mentorship of one teacher.

"Norm Deveroux, who at the time was both my middle school and high school biology teacher, was really influential with my connection to wildlife biology," he said. "I think he's the one that made me realize that being a scientist was a reality and an option for me. Before then, I had never interacted with a biologist, and I didn't really know what they did."

After graduating high school in the early 2000s, Gómez earned his bachelor's degree in science from Southern Oregon University in environmental studies in 2007, his master's in 2011 and eventually his doctorate degree in natural resource sciences from Washington State University in 2020.

But Gómez's trajectory through higher education was not easy. His college years were marked by hardships, barriers and a tragic family loss.



A journey through science

Like so many people of color in STEM fields, Gómez lived in fear of not having enough money to pay for school, and he knew he needed professional experience too.

During college, Gómez worked at Safeway and as a janitor in order to make enough money so he could volunteer in laboratories in the summer.

"I knew people who could volunteer in Costa Rica doing turtle surveys for the summer and I had colleagues that had cars thanks to their parents, and so they could take that tech job across the country. I didn't have that," he said.

Then, while he was working two jobs and studying hard to earn lab experiences, tragedy hit. His brother, Edrik, died in a helicopter crash.

Edrik died on Aug. 5, 2008, in the Iron 44 tragedy in Oregon. He and nine firefighters lost their lives after their helicopter crashed in a remote area of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. At the time, Gómez's brother was going into his junior year as an honors student at Southern Oregon University. According to official reports, the chopper his brother boarded had been over the maximum weight before the firefighters stepped on board. Edrik was 19.

At the time, Gómez was in his second year of grad school at SOU. The sudden loss of his brother deeply affected him both personally and academically.

"It took me a little longer to finish my degree because of that tragedy. Me and my brother



Gómez holds a portrait of his late younger brother Edrik taken in 2007, a year before he died in a helicopter accident.

were really close. To this day it still hurts, and I don't think I ever want it not to hurt," Gómez said. "I guess that feeling of hurt is acknowledgement and knowing of the love that I had and still have for him. In a way, that pain almost makes me still feel connected to him."

Gómez graduated with his master's from SOU in 2011. Despite the tragic loss of his brother, he was determined to pursue the highest level of education a STEM college student can achieve — a Ph.D.

As he worked toward his doctorate at Washington State University, Gómez kept advocating for people like him. At WSU, he served as an adviser for the university's Latino student group, and he organized workshops and presentations to encourage BIPOC high school students to go to college and undergraduates to go on to graduate school.

Throughout his time in college, Gómez saw first-hand the lack of diversity in science academia.

"I never had a Latino professor, and I never had a professor of color teach in any of my STEM classes. I mean, it was that dramatic," he said. "My students now have something I never had back when I was in college — a professor of color."

This semester, Gómez is working toward starting a Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in

Science chapter at UM to encourage underrepresented students to study science. SACNAS is a national society that aims for true diversity in STEM fields, promoting advanced degrees and leadership.

Gomez uses his own background — and his classroom — to do this.

"Historically, this has been taught from an Anglo-Eurocentric perspective, so I try to incorporate components of traditional ecological knowledge and spend time critiquing some of the ways that we've done wildlife management in the past while giving a holistic view of our conservation heroes like John Muir and Gifford Pinchot, who did great things, but also had problematic and racist views," he said.

Alan Townsend, dean of the W.A. Franke College of Forestry & Conservation, said the college is committed to restructuring parts of its curriculum to make it more inclusive and, importantly, more critical.

The college ran workshops that focus on adapting curriculum and teaching to be more inclusive, he said, adding, "I've seen genuine desire amongst the faculty to change how they approach their teaching."

Even though these efforts to change curriculum are under way, Townsend said the college is not at the level he wants it to be. He acknowledged there's more work to be done in terms of hiring a diverse pool of faculty and retaining

and supporting students from underrepresented groups.

"Diversity, equity and inclusion is a serious priority for me and for the college," Townsend said. "This is serious and difficult work that doesn't happen overnight and needs to be kept as a priority. We are not nearly as diverse in our representation as we should be."

Senior Adrianna Medina, a Latina student majoring in parks, tourism and recreation management, said taking a class from Gomez was about more than relating to him as a BIPOC student.

"I have a disability, which is ADHD, and he really helped me learn and get through it," Medina said. "So that was really beneficial for my college experience because I know a lot of students who have trouble having a disability and going through Disability Services and not learning in the best way that they can. We also had that Latino perspective with each other, so it was really nice to have that connection, especially in a place like Montana where I see a lot of white folks."

Medina, who is also the president of the Latinx Student Union at UM, said there needs to be more work on behalf of the University regarding diversity and the retention of Latino and Hispanic students.

"There's close to no efforts from the University on that, but LSU does a lot of research

and engagement with the Latino community," she said. "Most of the time, our community members aren't UM students because there's not a very large Latino population right now, so we try to gather as much information from our Latino communities. There's not nearly enough engagement as there should be."

Around the University, there are more faculty who, like Gómez, are serving underrepresented students with efforts to promote more diversity, equity and inclusivity throughout campus.

Growing up on the Blackfeet Reservation, Wilena Old Person, the program coordinator at the College of Health, is determined to continue to strive for a more diverse representation of all BIPOC students at UM.

Old Person serves as the staff co-chair of the University's Diversity Advisory Council, where she works to provide institutional knowledge to President Seth Bodnar's administration.

The DAC started as a task force and transitioned to become an advisory council in 1992. Despite years of working with the University administration, Old Person said the council has yet to transition from simply talking about diversity to taking real action.

"One of the frustrations that we felt was that we are a discussion group when we want it to be action-oriented," she said. "We felt like we carried a lot of the weight of the diversity institutional plan, because students, staff and faculty would come to us with any issues they've had after reaching out to the Equal Opportunity Office because they wanted to have more action and get stuff done."

Even though the University claims to be making efforts toward diversity and inclusion, Old Person says issues of systemic racism still exist on campus.

"I felt like our students weren't being heard, and as a staff member of color, I would see systemic racism [directed] at the students and at myself, not only in this building and in my college but on this campus in our community," she said. "You know it's there. So to say that it's not there is not okay."

The DAC recently released a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, which "aims to identify the equity gaps unique to our institution, to flag the policies and practices that contribute to these gaps, and to implement new policies and practices that will bridge them."

Kuntz said the new plan provides a way to reach DEI goals that reflect the diversity of society and enriches the educational experience.

"Having a more diverse faculty and leadership that students can look up to and follow in the footsteps of is critical to building a healthy campus that's rich with diversity and provides opportunities for everybody," Kuntz said.

As for Gómez, he believes in what he and others at the University are doing to create a campus that's diverse — one that supports and encourages students of color to pursue careers in science.

"My hope is that with my students seeing me in this position helps inspire and remind them that they too can be part of the wildlife profession," he said.



Gómez, lecturing in a classroom in the Social Sciences building on Sept. 28, says he enjoys engaging with his students to build stronger relationships. Every day, he wears a traditional Mexican guayabera shirt to class as a way to share his appreciation of his culture and family background.



Diversity Advisory Council Staff Co-Chair Wilena Old Person holds the council's newly released Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan, produced in conjunction with President Seth Bodnar's administration. Old Person says there's still much more work to be done regarding diversity and serving under represented student groups at the University of Montana.



Latinx Student Union President Adrianna Medina is working to connect with more of the Latino and Hispanic community at UM and in the Missoula area to promote cultural events on campus. Medina, who identifies as multi-racial and was a student in one of Gómez's wildlife biology classes, says having that Latino perspective with Gómez allowed her to connect in his class and get past some of her own barriers in academics.

Trick or treat yourself to these spooky-season movies

What time is it? IT'S ~SPOOKY~ SEASON!!!! That's right, it's time for pumpkin spice lattes, unnecessarily large scarves, cringey Instagram posts and HALLOWEEN MOVIES! Scary, goofy, demonic or fun — Halloween movies are NECESSARY for maximum fall vibes. But which to watch? No need to fear (yet), we've got you covered. Welcome to the ultimate Halloween movie guide for this spooky season, courtesy of your favorite Kaimin arts reporters.

'LAST NIGHT IN SOHO' IS YOUR NEW FAVORITE BLAST FROM THE PAST

Nothing says spooky season like jump scares, ghosts and maybe even the occasional trip back in time. Well, what better way to get all that than through Edgar Wright's latest psychological horror, "Last Night in Soho"?

If you liked "Coraline," this might be the movie for you. Eloise, the main character, slips between two different worlds of London in the 1960s, living two different and spooky lives, each with its own set of ghosts.

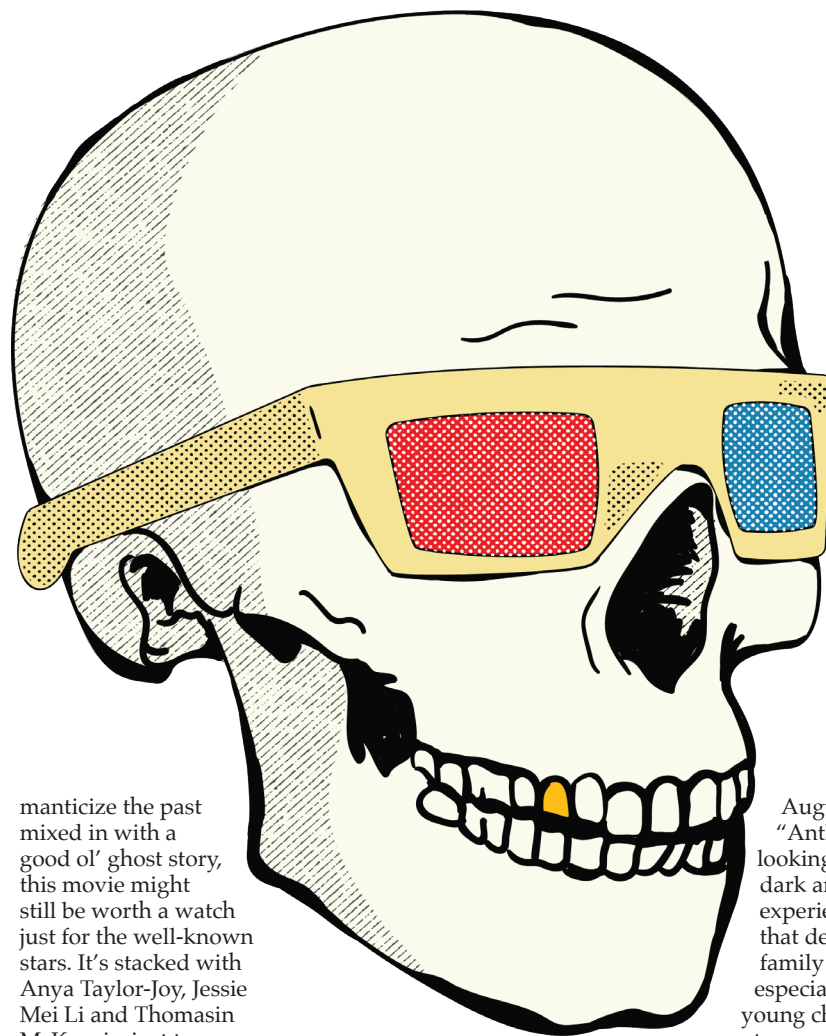
The movie is portrayed as more thriller than horror, with snippets from some of the scenes in the trailer appearing tense and eerie as things escalate from beginning to end.

As the trailer clips jump back and forth between Eloise and the blond persona she changes into when she swaps time frames, the bright colors and eerie music help tease the glamour and thrill of it all. But things might not be as nice as they seem.

Even if you don't like movies that ro-



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manticize the past mixed in with a good ol' ghost story, this movie might still be worth a watch just for the well-known stars. It's stacked with Anya Taylor-Joy, Jessie Mei Li and Thomasin McKenzie, just to name a few.

"Last Night in Soho" will be released in theaters on Oct. 29th. (Maura Lynch)

AFTER THREE YEARS, 'ANTLERS' FINALLY SNAGS A RELEASE DATE

After what has felt like an eternity of waiting, the horror film "Antlers" is finally set to hit theaters after countless release date changes. It was originally going to premiere in August 2020, but now, more than a year later, a physical release is actually on the horizon.

"Antlers" will tell the story of a grade school teacher and one of her students, whose family is harboring an ancient, supernatural secret. After taking the boy into her care, the teacher might be biting off more than she can chew.

Based on the trailer that dropped in

August 2019, "Antlers" is looking to be a dark and hopeless experience. Films that deal with family struggles, especially with a young child at the center, are always tough to stomach. Mix

that with a flesh-eating spirit and it might just be unbearable.

The monster in question is, interestingly, the Wendigo. For those unfamiliar, the Wendigo is a mythological spirit from the legends of the Algonquin-speaking tribes, originating in the eastern forests of the U.S. and Canada. The Wendigo has been tackled by the American film industry before, but never with much commercial success. Searchlight is hoping to break that trend with "Antlers."

Whether or not "Antlers" will succeed, after eons of waiting, is still up in the air. An original concept, sure, but when it comes down to it, the film looks like it will end up being pretty standard horror fare, and that might just be what you need.

"Antlers" is playing in theaters as of Oct. 5. (Josh Moyar)

'ARMY OF THIEVES' IS THE UNDEAD VERSION OF 'OCEANS 11'

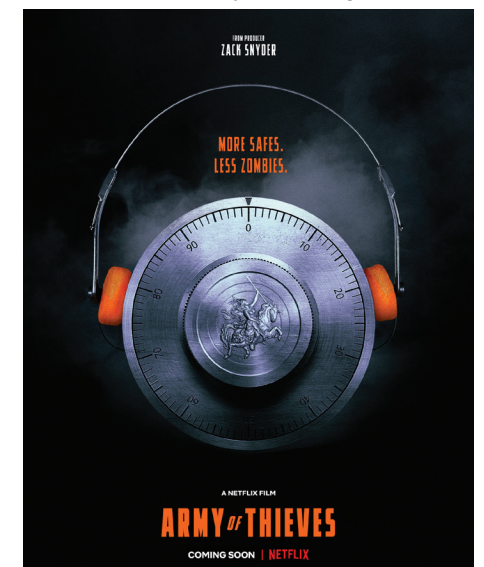
Ah yes, another fucking zombie movie. But hey, it's Spooky Season. If you want to get freaky and explore your food palette of human flesh, the upcoming pseudo-spy zombie movie "Army of Thieves" may just satiate your cravings.

Usually, zombie flicks are pretty cut-and-dried, but this franchise is a little more complicated than the nuts and bolts of surviving the zombie apocalypse. To avoid confusion, you might want to watch Zack Snyder's "Army of the Dead" before Halloween night. First of all, it will catch you up to speed on the zombie-heist hierarchy, and second, you get to see Dave Bautista's sexy-ass tattoos.

"Army of Thieves," unlike its chronological successor, is advertised as more of a heist movie than a zombie flick. Set near the beginning of the outbreak, the plot centers on German safecracker Ludwig Dieter (Matthias Schweighöfer) and a group of aspiring thieves on a "top secret" heist during the eight stages of the zombie apocalypse.

Shots from the "Army of Thieves" teaser trailer feature speedy, safe-cracking zombies feasting on live television and, of course, a diverse cast of characters with a special set of skills. In short, it's the Oceans' franchise with zombies. If you're not into traditional horror movies, heists and zombies might be for you. It's the kind of intuitive twist that made "Army of the Dead" watchable, even if it was ridiculously stupid. But stupid is fun if you do it right.

"Army of Thieves" is set to release on Netflix Oct. 29. (Haley Yarborough)



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HORROR GETS WOOLY WITH A24'S 'LAMB'

If you like “Shaun the Sheep” even in the slightest, this movie might be for you.

New indie hit “Lamb” tells the story of a childless couple deep in the countryside of Iceland. After years of trying and failing to have a baby, a mysterious child is delivered to them in the form of a human-sheep hybrid.

Described by A24 as Icelandic folktale meets Nordic livestock horror, “Lamb” is set to be one of the most unique horror movies to reach audiences in quite a while.

Anyone who’s watched the trailer for “Lamb” can attest to the ridiculously strange vibes of the film. The image of the little lamb lad (who likes berries and cream, presumably) wearing a sweater and holding hands with his mother is enough to chill your spine.

This is far from A24’s first take on batshit-crazy horror, so it’s in good hands. But what will make or break “Lamb” is, of course, the lamb itself. Hopefully the film will follow John Carpenter’s horror legacy and go heavy on the practical effects instead of following the industry’s increasing use of plain bad CGI. A freakish lamb puppet, in the vein of “Eraserhead,” would be a lot more effective than another ugly, digitally-created mutant baby as seen in the “Twilight” films. Then again, what’s scarier than that?

“Lamb” will be available in theaters October 8. (JM)

THE ‘FEAR STREET’ TRILOGY IS YOUR CLOSETED DREAM

Lesbi-honest — this ain’t your typical horror movie series. If you like vintage ‘90s

grunge vibes, watching two girls kiss and being scared out of your ass, then this series will go above and beyond your little closeted dreams.

The Fear Street trilogy, based on R.L. Stine’s spooky book series, follows a group of high schoolers who find themselves the stars of a 300 year-long curse that has caused havoc and murder sprees in their hometown, Shadyside.

The curse, which dates back to 1666 (the final movie), runs through each film, centering around a rivalry that has separated two towns from coexisting and defeating the curse. The safe town, Sunnyside, watches on its pretty green lawns as its Shadyside neighbors get fucked with mass murder sprees every few years with seemingly no reason as to why.

This series not only follows a cute and nontraditional love story, but it also passes the Halloween vibe check: gore, jump scares, stupid decisions and unlikely turns of events. But, especially for all the gays out there, this one’s for you.

The Fear Street trilogy is available on Netflix. (Clarise Larson)

‘BLACK AS NIGHT’ IS A FANG-CIFUL VAMPIRE MOVIE TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO

It’s fall and you know what that means ... more stereotypical vampire movies! If you add a unique perspective, an unexpected turn of events and some blood-sucking villains, you’ve got the new horror movie “Black as Night.”

This is just one of the handful of horror movies Blumhouse is set to release this spooky season on Amazon Prime and is bound to satisfy your vampire craving for the year. From the villainous vampires preying on people to the group of ragtag teenagers with self-esteem issues trying to save humanity, this movie has a little something for everyone.

The “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” vibes the trailer gives off show just how good the

visuals and effects are in “Black as Night,” despite the fact there may not be a whole lot of blood and gore in the horror movie itself. However, the seemingly infinite jump scares might make up for it.

“Black as Night” combines horror, social commentary, comedy and a coming-of-age story in one vampire movie that the right audience could really sink its teeth into. Don’t believe me? Check it out for yourself.

“Black as Night” is available to stream now on Amazon Prime. (ML)

‘VENOM: LET THERE BE CARNAGE’ EMBRACES ITS SILLY SIDE

“Venom: Let There Be Carnage” is the perfect Valentine’s Day flick.

What about Halloween? Well, it depends on if you want to laugh or scream.

At first glance, this movie is the same mind-numbing, anti-hero extravaganza that made the 2018 “Venom” a critical failure.

With poor CGI, corny lines and dull action, “Venom: Let There Be Carnage” is still very much on the same wavelength of its predecessor. But don’t let the trailers completely fool you.

Beneath the standard, comic-book action facade is a titular love story. Not between Tom Hardy’s Eddie Brock and Michelle Williams, or even Woody Harrelson’s villainous Cletus (and Carnage) and Naomi Harris’ mutant Shriek, but between Eddie and the hulking, slightly toxic symbiote within him: Venom.

And holy shit, is it funny.

Part of Venom’s intrigue is the push and pull between man and symbiote, which culminates into something reminiscent of an old married couple. Between the petty arguments, breakups and eventual rediscovery of love, the dynamic between Eddie and Venom is like watching scenes from a quirky rom-com (with lots of chickens). Hardy, per usual, is a delight to watch. Even his characteristic grunts compliment Venom’s embellished dialogue, where his sludgy head emerges to complain about his craving



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for “heads.” How can a man have so much chemistry with himself?

But don’t get too comfortable with a cuddly, cozy, rom-com version of Venom. As the end credits allude, this Eddie-loving symbiote may play a much more sinister role in the inevitable sequel to come. (HY)

DADDY MICHAEL MYERS DOES IT AGAIN IN ‘HALLOWEEN KILLS’

FACT: There is no better way to celebrate the Halloween season than by watching the next spooky hit of the holiday’s namesake franchise.

“Halloween Kills” is the 12th installment of the infamous “Halloween” franchise and the sequel to the 2018 reboot “Halloween” (super original names).

The movie follows right where the last film left off: Michael Myers being creepy as shit and surviving a seemingly unsurvivable basement fire (shocker!) only to continue traumatizing the recently stabbed Laurie Strode (played by Jamie Lee Curtis, Hollywood veteran and yogurt consumer) and the rest of the town.

Even the trailer, which features Myers surrounded by fire with his iconic white mask and a bloody knife in hand, will surely get you in a scary mood and make you remember to bring your pepper spray on your nightly walks. Don’t miss out on seeing the movie this spooky season, whether it’s on your couch or in the theaters. Who doesn’t love scream-crying with strangers in a dark room, right?

Available in theaters and to stream on Peacock Oct. 15. (CL)



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UM baseball returns, even as club sports face uncertainty

TYE BROWN

tye.brown@umontana.edu

Recruitment for club sports at the University of Montana has taken a hit since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, but many teams are determined to make a comeback this year. This includes UM club baseball, which looks forward to reviving student interest in the sport and participating in its approaching spring season.

According to head coach Nick Rackley, the team practiced all last year when weather permitted, but didn't get to compete because of traveling conflicts with COVID-19.

Rackley said 2021 looks more promising. Travel restrictions from ASUM have loosened, and participation has increased slightly. The baseball team now has a roster of 13 men. With enrollment up, the list this season consists mostly of new recruits.

According to Gwen Coon, ASUM's office manager, the biggest challenge last year for club sports was enlisting new members.

"The recruitment was really limited last fall," she said. "Active in-person recruitment wasn't allowed to happen."

Every fall semester, ASUM-designated student groups congregate on the Oval, set up tables, make their pitches to prospective students and hold sign-ups. Last year, however, the annual gathering was canceled.

While some clubs have stayed popular, such as lacrosse and hockey, some have not fared as well. Coon said last year men's rugby went defunct and the women's team is struggling to start up again this semester. Other club teams like fencing are losing members and could soon disappear. Even with the ebb and flow of enrollment in student groups through the years, COVID-19 became the most difficult obstacle to overcome for many.

"It's been nice because we've gotten a huge freshman class this year," Rackley said about the new season. "And we've been doing a lot more over-the-summer recruiting."

Rackley also said he hopes to pick up more players in the spring ahead of the conference kick-off tournament in Mesquite, Nevada, the first week of March. The National Club Baseball Association, which

UM's team is part of, plans on continuing with its regular 2021 schedule.

"This is probably the best turnout we've had since I've been around," said Kennedy McKay, UM baseball's club president.

McKay is a senior and has been with the team for the last three years.

"We actually have enough kids now to fill the team, with a couple people on the bench. It's nice to have a couple extra arms. So we just want kids to know that it's here. More kids, better opportunities," McKay said. "This is the best baseball team I've played on in my three years. We've got the most energy. We got the most chemistry, for sure."

The team practices at Missoula Playfair Park, behind the YMCA on Russell Street. Running drills through the cool evening in the mostly empty park, they evoke images of the folksy group of ruffians portrayed in "The Sandlot." Brought together by their affection for America's pastime, they quip with each other and enthuse about the game with an informal attitude.

Their laid-back nature doesn't mean they don't take their sport seriously. During UM baseball's first tournament of the season in Bozeman Sept. 18-19, it went 3-1, beating Wayne State and Montana State in the process.

Drew Beckett, a freshman who began practicing with the club after it's first games, compared the group atmosphere to his fraternity, as well as his high school team in Boise. "It's just a bunch of boys talking, having fun. It's like a brotherhood almost, similar to one. A baseball team, those are your boys," he said.

Beckett, the club's newest member, said he didn't plan to play baseball when he came to UM, but is glad he was convinced by his fraternity brothers. "Back home when I was playing baseball, those were always people I could fall on," he said. "It's a support system, and I feel like that's something here."

He then echoed the core of the reason behind the group's resilience.

"Also, I just love playing baseball, and I want to continue to do that here."



Charles Nance, a member of the University of Montana's Baseball Club, throws to a teammate during practice at Missoula Playfair Park. After member numbers dropped during the pandemic, the club is looking to revive student interest as it prepares for the team's resurgence. LUKAS PRINOS | MONTANA KAIMIN

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Montana loses heartbreaker to Eastern Washington

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On prime-time television, the University of Montana Grizzlies lost to the Eastern Washington Eagles 28-34 in a rollercoaster of a game that came down to the final play.

"Rollercoasters end at some point," Eastern Washington head coach Aaron Best said. "There is always going to be a down part and there's always going to be an up part. But last time I checked ... you can always get on that ride again."

Both the Griz and the Eagles came into the game undefeated, ranked 4th and 6th respectively in the Football Championship Subdivision. The game was the first time that a regular season Big Sky Conference game was played on ESPN, airing in the late-night slot on ESPN2.

"I would rather nobody was watching," UM head coach Bobby Hauck said after the game.

Montana is now 0-6 on Eastern Washington's signature red turf, known as the "Inferno."

Eastern Washington received the opening kickoff and started the game with a bang when Eagles star quarterback Eric Barriere found receiver Talolo Limu-Jones for a 51-yard reception. The very next play Barriere connected with receiver Andrew Boston on a screen pass to put Eastern Washington up 7-0 on the Griz.

Barriere had a field day against the Griz, passing for 422 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions. Limu-Jones racked up 231 receiving yards while Boston had 80 receiving yards and two touchdowns.

"We approach every single game (with) the same mentality," Boston said after the game. "We're out here just trying to get better every single week."

Montana's first possession ended quickly when redshirt senior quarterback Cam Humphrey threw a quick incomplete pass. The Griz defense retaliated and forced a punt from Eastern Washington.

After another punt from both EWU and UM, the Griz offense finally pulled together a successful drive thanks to a 26-yard pass by Humphrey to receiver Samuel Akem that put UM in Eastern Washington territory. Once on the Eagles' side of the red field, Montana slowly drove the ball forward until running back Xavier Harris tied the game at 7-7 with a one-yard touchdown run.

Harris had 124 rushing yards and a touchdown in the game while Humphrey threw for 150 yards with two touchdowns and two

interceptions.

The first quarter ended tied 7-7.

To start the second quarter, Montana's defense forced Eastern Washington to punt again. Both teams punted six times in the game.

Once UM got the ball back, the Griz offense faced a daunting third-and-six on its own 27-yard line. Humphrey made a big throw to receiver Malik Flowers, who dragged his knee into Eastern Washington's side line while catching the ball.

Flowers' catch was originally ruled in-bounds, but the play went under review. Despite boos from the crowd, the official call stood and UM collected a first down.

Right after the controversial catch, Harris found a hole in the Eastern Washington defense and ran the ball for 44 yards into Eastern Washington's redzone. Three plays later, Humphrey threw a beautiful pass to Akem in the front right of the endzone for a 4-yard touchdown.

The senior-to-senior connection put UM up 14-7.

The teams exchanged punts on their next two drives. With just under nine minutes left in the first half, Eastern Washington got the ball and drove into Montana territory before sputtering at the Montana 15.

Eagles kicker Jackson Cleaver knocked in a 32-yard field goal for Eastern Washington to narrow Montana's lead to 14-10.

Right before halftime, Barriere threw a long, desperate pass that was intercepted by UM cornerback Justin Ford. The Montana interception was the first turnover of the game. The halftime score stood at 14-10.

Montana received the second-half kickoff and quickly set the tone. Humphrey found Akem for a 14-yard pass and then Harris rushed for 28 yards to put Montana on the EWU 17-yard line. Humphrey then found fullback Joey Elwell for a 15-yard touchdown pass to put Montana up 21-10.

After UM's early second half score, both teams forced each other to punt. With seven minutes left in the third quarter, Barriere made a bad decision. He threw a pass that was intercepted by UM linebacker Marcus Welnel.

After the big play by Welnel, UM took over on the Eastern Washington 36. The Griz offense didn't pick up a first down and kicker Kevin Macias was sent out to attempt a 48-yard field goal.

Eastern Washington made a huge, momentum-shifting play and blocked Macias' field goal. The Eagles then drove down the field on a successful drive that ended with a Barriere pass to receiver Efton Chism III for a touchdown.



Montana redshirt junior wide receiver Malik Flowers gets tackled by Eastern Washington defenders after completing a pass from Montana quarterback Cam Humphrey in the second quarter at Field in Cheney, Wash., on Oct. 3. In what ended up as a tight game, No. 4 Montana suffered a 28-34 loss against the No. 6 Eagles. The Griz are now 0-6 on Eastern Washington's signature, turf the "Inferno."

ANTONIO IBARRA | MONTANA KAIMIN

After the touchdown, Eastern Washington went for a two-point conversion and failed. The Griz held a 21-16 edge going into the fourth quarter.

On UM's next drive, the Griz offense failed and had to punt. Barriere found Limu-Jones for a massive, 58-yard catch to put EWU on UM's 2-yard line.

A play later the Eagles scored, making it a 22-21 Eastern-Washington lead. EWU then declined to kick a field goal and once again went for two points. On its second two-point conversion attempt, EWU was successful.

The score stood 24-21 in Eastern Washington's favor with 13:26 left in the game.

Montana took possession and drove the ball deep into the Eastern Washington territory. Things were looking up for the Griz, until Humphrey threw an interception in the left corner of the endzone.

Eastern Washington took over on its own 25-yard line, but immediately advanced the ball to the Montana 19-yard line thanks to some big offensive plays. Two plays later, Eastern Washington scored, going up 31-21 on Montana.

Montana needed an answer and the team got it. Flowers took EWU's kickoff back 99 yards for a touchdown and narrowed the Eagles' lead to 31-28.

On Eastern Washington's next possession,

the Eagles had to punt. Montana got the ball back with a chance to take the lead. But Humphrey threw another interception.

After a drawn-out Eastern Washington drive, the Eagles settled for a field goal. The score stood 34-28 in EWU's favor with 1:21 left in the game. Only chaos ensued.

Montana drove the ball down to EWU's 37-yard line when Humphrey was seriously injured on a run. The game paused with 23 seconds left as trainers helped Humphrey off the field, not putting any weight on his right leg. Hauck said he did not know the status of Humphrey's injury after the game.

Montana backup quarterback Kris Brown assumed the helm of the Montana offense with 4 seconds and 13 yards left. He scrambled to his right, then his left and launched a prayer towards the endzone. More chaos ensued in the endzone and then the ball found its final resting place, the red turf.

"They had to throw the ball," Eastern Washington's Calin Criner said after the game. "Whether it was Cam (Humphrey) or it was 12 (Kris Brown), we knew things were going to stay the same."

Montana is now 3-1 on the season. Its next game will be against Dixie State Oct. 8.

"It's a loss. We're 1-1 in the conference and I'm not very happy about it," Hauck said.

Missoula rallies for reproductive rights over restrictive abortion laws

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More than 100 people stood in solidarity with nationwide reproductive rights protests in a UM student-organized rally on the Missoula County Courthouse lawn Saturday.

"There's been really targeted attacks against birthing peoples' bodies, abortions and reproductive justice that we need to address," said UM Women's Resource Center Director Mia McKinney, the organizer of the Missoula rally.

People gathered in cities across the nation to protest challenges to *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court case that legalized abortion. SCOTUS already voted to sustain a controversial Texas Senate bill that allows civilians to sue actors in abortion procedures. The court will also begin hearing arguments on a Mississippi law that could effectively overturn *Roe v. Wade* by allowing bans on abortions before a fetus can survive outside of the womb.

McKinney, a UM student, focused her rally in Missoula on three abortion-restricting bills Gov. Gianforte signed in the last legislative session. They were slated to take effect on Oct. 1, but a district judge made the eleventh-hour decision Sept. 30 to halt

the bill's enforcement for 10 days to consider a lawsuit challenging their constitutionality levied by Planned Parenthood.

"I was inspired by anger, basically," McKinney said. "The laws are going to be extremely harmful for our community, so I wanted to set up a place to gather and support one another and make our voices heard."

McKinney provided sign-making stations and scripts to call Montana federal representatives and Gov. Gianforte at the rally, and attendees chanted phrases like "abortion is healthcare" and "my body, my choice" in unison for over an hour. The crowd mostly consisted of Missoula women, some of whom were with their families, and older women committed to continuing a fight for reproductive justice that started more than 50 years ago.

"My generation was coming into this fight before *Roe v. Wade*, and women were in back alleys and traveling hundreds of miles just to exercise their rights," Nina Benjamin, a 65-year-old Missoula native, said. "We've been fighting this fight for so long and thought that it was settled. To be fighting again and seeing healthcare professionals being threatened is just heart-breaking."

The rally saw counter protesters when

anti-mask activists who convene by the courthouse every Saturday morning caught wind of the event. Some weekly participants like Ferris Orr engaged in heated discussions with rally attendants, and at one point attempted to shout over the speakers with his megaphone by yelling phrases like "abortion is murder." Early in the rally, a man on a bike with a "Fuck Biden" flag rode through the crowd and coughed at the protesters.

"The healthcare of women has turned into a political fight," Benjamin said. "Anti-abortion people don't understand that it's a medical procedure."

The event ended without incident and with an air of positivity. McKinney and her fellow protesters were disheartened by the circumstances that gathered them together on Saturday, but they were inspired by the community's support and rallying for reproductive justice, with many of them inclined to share their own abortion experiences and work towards an active future for reproductive justice advocacy.

"I don't think those old men that are in power will change their minds, but the more people that show up, the better chances we have," 72-year-old Missoula native Sue Wehmeyer said.



Missoula resident Jean Croxton holds a sign advocating for women's rights. The downtown Missoula rally protested the signing of three abortion-restricting bills by Gov. Gianforte in the last legislative session. RIDLEY HUDSON | MONTANA KAIMIN



Rain Biddle, a freshman at Hellgate High School, waves a sign that reads "Don't Fuck With My Uterus" atop one of their friend's shoulders.

RIDLEY HUDSON | MONTANA KAIMIN



Oscar Wilhelmy, a freshman at the University of Montana, shows his support for the women's rally in downtown Missoula.

RIDLEY HUDSON | MONTANA KAIMIN



Missoulians wave signs advocating for the reproductive rights of women on West Broadway Street for cars and pedestrians passing by to see during a University of Montana student-organized rally on the Missoula County Courthouse lawn on Oct. 2. More than 100 people stood outside the courthouse.

RIDLEY HUDSON | MONTANA KAIMIN